

LANDSCAPE TRUCK MANUFACTURER GROWS BUSINESS BY RETHINKING PRODUCT DESIGNS

ABOUT SUPER LAWN TRUCKS. Tony Bass, CEO and founder of Super Lawn Trucks, began his career as a lawn maintenance contractor in Fort Valley, Georgi. Always focused on improving efficiency, Bass developed a plan to eliminate trailers from his growing landscape company and realized a need in the market for specialized landscaping truck systems. He raised capital to start a new business, Super Lawn Trucks, and began manufacturing truck systems for storage and transport of tools and equipment. Starting with three employees in 1998, Super Lawn Trucks has grown to more than a dozen team members. Today, the company has clients in 45 states and Canada.

THE CHALLENGE. Bass first contacted the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership at Georgia Tech (GaMEP), part of the MEP National Network™, during an economic downturn. He partnered with GaMEP project manager Bob Wray to learn how to improve the company's processes and discovered the importance of rethinking product design. Bass found a long-term partner in Wray from their initial redesign project. Bass and Wray have teamed up on numerous re-engineering projects over the years, as well as a recent effort to break into a new market.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. GaMEP worked with Super Lawn Trucks on product redesigns for a bolt-on loading ramp, a landscape dump truck, and specialty trucks for construction contractors. The stronger, more economic bolt-on loading ramp created a new job at the company and produced numerous variations, including an eco-series. After Bass determined a need in the market, Wray helped to redevelop the company's landscape dump trucks to include an enclosed body for landscapers to store their tools, equipment, and additional fuel, allowing crews to stay on-site throughout day. Next, Wray and Bass discussed the potential for similar products in the construction contractor market. Super Lawn Products created a truck to help contractors organize equipment and supplies, ensure tool security, and mobilize from job to job. The company sold more than three dozen specialty trucks in a short time, and Bass and Wray are teaming up to create additional products for the new customers. At the same time, Super Lawn Trucks is working on a revised plant layout to account for its continued growth.

"I began working with Bob a few years back and he has become a part of our team. We continue to utilize GaMEP because they help us grow sales and improve products. We appreciate the relationship...and...don't know where we would turn without this important service provider."

-Tony Bass, CEO, founder

RESULTS



Completed at least **3** product redesigns



Developed and sold over **36** products in new market



Company grew to **12** employees (up from 3)



Decreased product weight by **20%** on initial redesign project

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